

AC 4496



ANNUAL REPORT 1954

*of the Special Services
After-Care Sub-Committee*



SEEN BY THE
MEDICAL OFFICER

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION COMMITTEE

RECEIVED BY THE
PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION COMMITTEE

REPORT
OF THE
SPECIAL SERVICES AFTER-CARE
SUB-COMMITTEE

E. L. RUSSELL, *Chief Education Officer*

MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL SERVICES AFTER-CARE SUB-COMMITTEE, 1954

COUNCILLOR MRS. F. M.
SMALLWOOD (*Chairman*).

MR. S. S. ALDERSON.

MISS F. A. BARLOW.

MR. B. C. BUCKLEY.

MISS J. DAVID
(*Member of Education Committee*).

MISS D. M. EDWARDS.

MR. G. W. EVANS.

COUNCILLOR MRS. D. M. FISHER
(*Member of Education Committee*).

ALDERMAN MRS. A. M. HOWES
(*Member of Health (Mental Health
Sub) Committee*).

MR. G. H. MEEK.

MISS D. E. NEWMAN.

ALDERMAN MRS. E. V. SMITH, J.P.
(*Chairman of Education Committee*).

MISS B. M. SMITH.

MR. A. E. TANSLEY.

MISS G. L. VAUGHAN.

COUNCILLOR MRS. E. WRIGHT, J.P.
(*Member of Education Committee*).

AFTER-CARE STAFF

After-Care Officer

After-Care Visitors

MRS. H. K. FINCH
MISS S. D. BIBBY, M.A.
MRS. K. WILLIAMS
MISS L. SMITH

OCCUPATION CENTRES

Supervisor, Erdington
(*From April, 1954*)

MISS W. M. LUCK

„ *Glebe Farm*

MISS M. L. BEINDER

„ *Kingstanding*

MISS O. M. WOOLLEY

„ *St. Oswald's*

MISS E. LAMB

„ *St. Paul's*

MRS. F. E. HOWELL

„ *Weoley Castle*

MRS. M. HILL

„ *Wretham Road*

MRS. E. A. COOKSEY

INDUSTRIAL CENTRES

Supervisor, Burlington Hall

MR. R. C. SLACK

„ *Moseley Road*

MR. J. E. LAMB

CENTRE FOR SENIOR GIRLS

Supervisor, Ellis Street
(*From April, 1954*)

MRS. M. B. BUSBY

Special Services After-Care Sub-Committee

ANNUAL REPORT

1954

The Special Services After-Care Sub-Committee have pleasure in presenting their 54th Annual Report. As in former years the report is concerned with all aspects of the work of the Committee, embracing both the supervision of former pupils of schools for the educationally subnormal and the training of those who have been excluded from attendance at a Special School.

Notwithstanding a temporary depletion in the After-Care staff, every effort was made during 1954 to maintain the continuity and intensity of the Committee's supervisory work. Conditions of full employment in industry have eased the lot of those defectives who are employable, and the main problems which have had to be dealt with have arisen from the shortage of housing accommodation, the need for more vacancies in Institutions and family difficulties of all kinds.

While it is recognised that in order to be completely effective, the visiting of all cases should be made with greater frequency, it is equally evident that particularly close supervision is needed of cases between the ages of 16 and 18. The delinquency statistics given at the end of this report confirm the view expressed in earlier years that the two years following the end of his school career constitute the most critical period in the life of a defective. By keeping in touch with him at frequent intervals much useful work can be done in helping him to orientate himself in his new surroundings of work and leisure, and in smoothing the relations between the defective and his family.

In the Committee's work of training defectives the most notable event in 1954 was the opening of the Ellis Street Occupation Centre for senior girls. With this latest development the Committee has taken the first step towards a comprehensive scheme of training designed to meet the needs of trainable defectives of all ages. It is already becoming apparent, however, that still further provision must be made for the training of both boys and girls over 16 in order to absorb the steady flow of children who, because of their age, can no longer remain in Occupation Centres. Since only a small proportion of such young persons will ever be employed it is obvious that a growing number will continue to require occupation and training lasting, in some cases, for a considerable number of years.

The length of waiting lists for admission to Occupation Centres forbids complacency, although it is noted with satisfaction that a total of 226 places are now available in Centres throughout the City. The present distribution of Occupation Centres between the North and South sides of the City is unevenly weighted in favour of the North, with the result that whereas some children in the North have been admitted either immediately after exclusion under Sec. 57 of the Education Act 1944 or after waiting for only a short period, many children on the South side have been waiting for over a year. The provision of a new Centre to relieve this congestion is the subject of active negotiation.

It is considered particularly desirable that in the case of excluded children who have already attended a Special School, training should commence in a Centre or by Home Teaching with as little delay as possible.

The shortage of Institutional vacancies continues to react unfavourably upon the intake of new children into Centres, since the Committee acknowledge their obligation to the parents of the most seriously defective cases, and seek to relieve them wherever possible by keeping such children in Centres until they can be admitted to an Institution.

Children and senior boys have again benefited from a week's holiday in the country, organised in separate parties of 25 at a time. The thanks of the Committee are extended to those members of Centre staffs who volunteered to undertake the arduous duties involved in looking after the children while on holiday.

The Committee also wish to thank all those employers and voluntary organisations who have willingly co-operated in providing opportunities and material comforts for many of the cases under their supervision. This co-operation, so freely given, constitutes a major factor in rendering effective the Committee's policy of befriending the defective and his family by every means which is practically possible.

CASES DEALT WITH DURING 1954

New cases reported for supervision numbered 291 making a total of 3,872 cases dealt with during the year. Of this number, 3,598 remain on the current file.

(a) CASES LIVING AT HOME AND GAINFULLY EMPLOYED:

(Males, 1,414; Females, 698; Total, 2,112).

Excluding men serving in the Army the percentage of those employed out of all male cases under supervision rose to 65.1 per cent. in 1954 as compared with 62.06 per cent. in 1953. The percentage of females employed fell by .5 per cent. to 42.1 per cent.

The higher level of employment among men has been made possible by the greater number of jobs available in all branches of industry, including work of the labouring type, which is the only kind of work which a high proportion of defectives are capable of performing. Unskilled factory work and building continue to offer the most favourable opportunities for lower-grade cases.

The constancy of the proportion of women employed affords evidence of the fact that many parents prefer to keep their daughters at home if they show any marked degree of retardation, and that married women do not usually continue at work beyond the first year of married life.

In the field of employment the Committee are concentrating upon two main tasks. The first is to supervise the progress of cases of unstable temperament who tend to change their work frequently and to encourage them to follow a settled occupation. As an example of this type of supervision,

"A," an eighteen year old youth of high-grade and unstable temperament, has been persuaded to keep his job in a paper mill for the past two years solely as a result of the joint efforts of his employer and the After-care visitor in charge of the case.

The second main task is, in consultation with the Youth Employment Bureau and Ministry of Labour Disablement Resettlement Officers, to find employment for defectives who are capable of performing only the simplest type of job under sheltered conditions. To this end, the co-operation of employers is actively solicited, and it is the constant endeavour of the Committee to extend the range of their relations with industrial firms. The following cases of former Industrial Centre boys will serve as examples of the results achieved.

"B," aged 21, began work for the first time in August, 1954, employed at a Corporation Salvage Depot.

"C," a timid lad of 18, has recently started work in a dairy.

"D," aged 25, has worked for over a year in an india-rubber factory, and now earns £7 a week.

A small number of cases continue to show maladjustment to work, either for temperamental reasons or because of some nervous disorder. Various methods are used in helping the defective to re-adjust himself to the requirements of industrial life.

A case of this type is:

"E," a high-grade man of aesthetic tastes and strong religious conviction who refused to take up any type of work after completing his National Service, chiefly because of his moral prejudice against working for gain. After many long discussions he has finally taken up work in a warehouse for an employer who is providing him with facilities for further education.

The following are examples of the most satisfactory cases dealt with during the year.

"F," a girl of 20, who was excluded from school at the age of 14, has worked at one firm as an assembler for the past five years, and now earns £6 12 0 per week.

"G," a man of 28, who served abroad with the R.A.F. has now fully recovered from tuberculosis following four years' illness and an operation for lung resection. He is now doing light work in a factory.

"H," a voluntary male case, aged 40, who suffers from severe physical handicaps, drives himself to work in his mechanical invalid carriage. After years of discomfort in lodgings, he and his wife, who is also physically handicapped, have recently secured their own house.

CASES DEALT WITH DURING 1954

	A		B		C		D		E		F	G		H		I		J	TOTALS			
	At home and gainfully employed	At home and not gainfully employed	At home and not gainfully employed	At home and not gainfully employed	In H.M. Forces	In Homes, Hospitals, etc., during 1954	Admitted to M.D. Institutions during 1954	Further Contact impossible during 1954	Presented to Case Committee during 1954	Reported deceased during 1954	Referred to other Authorities during 1954	De-certified during 1954										
A—Cases reported during 1954— (1) Vol. Supervision (2) Stat. Supervision	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M & F			
	62 43	28 37	1 7	3 4	— —	2 —	— 4	— 1	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	65 54	31 42	96 96	
B—Cases reported prior to 1954 for— (1) Vol. Supervision (2) Stat. Supervision	386 738	208 353	14 62	99 239	43 4	— —	11 32	8 18	— 12	— 9	3 5	2 3	41 48	24 42	2 7	2 2	— 5	1 7	— —	500 913	344 673	844 1586
	—	—	49	48	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	50	49	99
C—Excluded from School during 1954	185	72	390	393	—	—	32	27	17	16	1	—	3	1	4	5	4	1	—	636	515	1151
	1414	698	523	786	47	—	77	53	34	27	9	5	92	67	13	9	9	9	—	2218	1654	3872
TOTALS, 1954	1378	717	531	762	44	—	88	49	39	24	20	8	113	103	11	10	6	7	2	2232	1680	3912
TOTALS, 1953																						

TRADES FOLLOWED BY THOSE WHO ARE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED

OCCUPATION	VOL.		STAT.		EX- CLUDED		TOTAL	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Assembling and packing	13	53	13	50	1	5	27	108
Bakery and food manufacture	14	12	36	27	15	4	65	43
Boot repairing	21	—	16	—	—	—	37	—
Building	36	—	112	—	5	—	153	—
Cinema and entertainments	6	4	19	6	—	—	25	10
Cleaning and domestic	—	17	2	22	1	13	3	52
Clerical work	4	6	—	1	—	—	4	7
Coal delivery	9	—	22	—	3	—	34	—
Electrical fitting	7	—	1	—	1	—	9	—
Factory work: unskilled and semi-skilled	178	96	356	217	96	31	630	344
Garage	4	—	7	1	1	—	12	1
Gardening and agriculture	8	1	13	—	8	—	29	1
Hairdressing	1	—	—	—	1	—	2	—
Hotel, cafe and canteen work	1	9	4	20	3	4	8	33
Laboratory assistant	1	—	1	—	—	—	2	—
Laundry	—	7	1	9	3	6	4	22
Leather trade	8	—	3	6	1	3	12	9
Meat trade	7	—	1	—	1	—	9	—
Odd jobs, porters & messengers	4	1	14	2	7	1	25	4
Painting and decorating	5	—	6	—	—	—	11	—
Paper manufacture and printing	3	1	11	4	4	—	18	5
Plating, jewellery & optical trades	18	5	7	10	—	2	25	17
Plumbing	8	—	8	—	—	—	16	—
Remploy: Factory	1	—	1	2	1	—	3	2
Paid work done at home	—	1	1	1	1	—	2	2
Roadwork	5	—	20	—	8	—	33	—
Delivery rounds & Salesmen	8	3	5	3	—	—	13	6
Salvage	2	—	11	1	1	1	14	2
Second-hand dealing	1	—	6	—	1	—	8	—
Sewing and tailoring	1	6	—	3	—	1	1	10
Splint making	1	—	1	—	—	—	2	—
Stabling and kennel work	1	1	1	—	1	—	3	1
Stone-masonry	1	—	1	—	—	—	2	—
Transport	24	—	26	—	4	—	54	—
Upholstery	2	2	5	—	—	—	7	2
Warehouse and store-keeping	9	11	9	5	2	1	20	17
Window cleaning	4	—	5	—	2	—	11	—
Woodwork	30	—	29	—	10	—	69	—
Water, gas and electricity work	2	—	7	—	3	—	12	—
TOTALS	448	236	781	390	185	72	1414	698

(b) LIVING AT HOME AND NOT GAINFULLY EMPLOYED:
(Males, 523; Females, 786; Total, 1,309).

ENGAGED IN	VOL.		STAT.		STAT. EXCL.		TOTAL		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M & F
Home duties	—	73	—	169	1	29	1	271	272
Helping local tradesmen	—	—	—	—	4	—	4	—	4
Attending O.C.s or I.C.s	—	2	10	11	208	141	218	154	372
Receiving home training	—	—	—	—	23	19	23	19	42
No occupation ..	11	23	51	54	198	249	260	326	586
Incapacitated by illness	2	4	6	9	3	2	11	15	26
Unemployed ..	2	—	2	—	1	1	5	1	6
Receiving private tuition	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	1
TOTAL	15	102	69	243	439	441	523	786	1,309

HOME DUTIES, 272. Of this total, 130 are married women engaged in looking after their own home.

HELPING LOCAL TRADESMEN, 4. The four men in this category are all in receipt of National Assistance grants, but supplement their grants by earnings of up to 10/- a week.

ATTENDING OCCUPATIONAL AND INDUSTRIAL CENTRES, 372. A substantial increase in this number as compared with previous years has been made possible by the opening, in April, 1954, of a new Occupation Centre devoted to the training of senior girls. The number of Occupation Centres for mixed juniors remains at seven, and there are in addition two Industrial Centres for senior boys. In most cases the transfer from Occupational to Industrial Centre is made not later than the child's sixteenth birthday. There are, however, several children under 16 in the Industrial Centres who are considered to be capable of benefiting from more advanced training and who, it is hoped, may eventually take up employment.

The total waiting list for admission to Occupation Centres has averaged 70 children throughout the year, in spite of the slight relief afforded by the opening of the Senior Girls' Centre. In an effort to reduce the number of children waiting, arrangements have been made for a small number of urgent cases to begin part-time attendance at Centres, where part-time vacancies become available through children, who have previously attended full-time, being recommended to attend part-time only on medical advice.

It is hoped that extra accommodation will shortly be made available in at least one of the boys' Industrial Centres in order to relieve the growing pressure for vacancies.

The removal of the Burlington Hall Occupation Centre to premises in quieter surroundings at Erdington was carried out in April, 1954 and has been generally welcomed by children, parents and staff alike.

Taxi transport to Centres has been provided for an average of twenty physically handicapped children throughout the year.

Ellis Street Occupation Centre for senior girls, the latest Centre to be opened, is situated in premises made available by the Hebrew Congregation near to the City centre. The girls who attend are divided into two groups according to age. In general, those over 21 attend on two alternate days a week, and those under 21 attend on the remaining three days. Guides are provided for all who cannot travel alone. The girls are drawn from all parts of the City, and many have an hour's journey to reach the Centre.

The training provided by a staff of three includes housewifery, physical training, games and musical activities, speech training and handicrafts of all kinds. By the end of the year a total of 62 girls and women, between the ages of 15 and 50 were in attendance. One girl, aged 18, has already left to work in a factory canteen, and it is hoped that others will soon be ready to take up employment.

RECEIVING HOME TRAINING, 42. Most of the children who are given home training receive a lesson once a week, either alone or in a group. Some of them are being trained at home for a temporary period whilst awaiting admission to an Occupation Centre. Others are being permanently home-trained, usually because of physical handicaps which prevent their attendance at a Centre. Owing to the increasing requirements of younger children, training has had to be discontinued with some of the older cases, but every effort is made to continue with an older case wherever it is felt that a regular lesson will stimulate the defective to be active and may prevent deterioration.

The present staff of three peripatetic assistant supervisors, much of whose time is taken up in travelling, is now barely sufficient to meet the growing need for home training among an increasing number of defectives. With a larger staff much valuable work could be done, both to prepare younger children for Centre training, and to compensate for the lack of Centre training among those children who cannot leave their own home.

NO OCCUPATION, 586. This total includes all defectives over 16 who are unsuitable for employment, children who are not receiving any form of training, whether awaiting admission to Occupation Centre or not, children awaiting admission to Institution and young children below the age of five.

Nearly every case in this category over the age of 16 receives a National Assistance Grant. It is worthy of note, however, that several of the older cases who have no occupation would be capable of doing work if it could be supplied to them at home. This observation applies particularly to the physically handicapped, to those who cannot travel to work alone and to epileptics.

Of the 79 epileptics under supervision 53 are included in the category of no occupation. Yet there are many who could work efficiently in the shelter of their own home. Great scope exists for the organisation of a scheme for home industry among defectives of the types mentioned.

SUFFERING FROM PROLONGED ILLNESS, 26. All of these cases have been ill for a year or longer. Nine are suffering from tuberculosis, two from heart disease and the remaining fifteen from nervous disorders of varying severity.

UNEMPLOYED, 6. All of these cases have been employed for some period in the past and are now unable to find work suited to their intellectual or physical limitations. The one woman is a severe epileptic living alone in much poverty.

(c) IN H.M. FORCES, 47.

Forty-three of the cases at present serving in the Army are under voluntary supervision. The majority are National Servicemen. They include one corporal and one lance-corporal. Of the four statutory cases, one entered the Army from Borstal. The remaining three are volunteers and are serving on a three years' engagement.

(d) RECEIVING RESIDENTIAL CARE IN HOMES, ETC.

	VOL.		STAT.		STAT. EXCL.		TOTAL		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M & F
Mental Hospitals	9	6	19	14	20	17	48	37	85
Hospitals and Homes	—	1	1	3	6	8	7	12	19
Epileptic Colonies	—	1	2	—	—	1	2	2	4
Prisons and Borstals	2	—	9	—	1	—	12	—	12
Children's Homes	—	—	—	—	3	1	3	1	4
Residential Nurseries	—	—	—	1	2	—	2	1	3
Approved School	2	—	1	—	—	—	3	—	3
TOTALS	13	8	32	18	32	27	77	53	130

During 1954, two cases were admitted to Sanatoria, one to an orthopaedic hospital and one to a private home for the mentally defective.

The majority of the cases in mental hospitals are receiving long-term care. Whenever a patient is discharged from any form of residential care supervision is resumed immediately.

Three of the cases resident in Children's Homes attend Occupation Centre.

(e) ADMITTED TO M.D. INSTITUTIONS DURING 1954, 61.

They were admitted in the following circumstances :—

Following death of parent	2
As a result of deterioration	24
As a result of severe retardation	11
As a result of refractory behaviour	6
Transferred from Residential E.S.N. School	4
Transferred from Children's Homes	2
Transferred from other Hospitals and Homes	7
Transferred from prison	2
In need of care and protection	2
In a state of neglect	1

Institutional accommodation is still urgently required for a large number of cases. The majority of those awaiting admission are children who are either severely retarded or beyond the control of their parents. In addition a smaller number of vacancies is required each year for older cases, who, owing either to their own deterioration or to changing family circumstances, can no longer be cared for at home.

(g) PRESENTED TO CASE COMMITTEE, 159.

Sixty-five voluntary and ninety-four statutory cases were released from supervision during the year. Men under statutory supervision are normally retained for supervision at least until the age of twenty-six when they cease to be liable for National Service. Other cases may be released at a lower age provided that their record has been satisfactory for at least two years prior to their presentation to the Case Committee. It is the practice of the Committee to release young National Servicemen within two years after their demobilisation, provided that they are then re-settled in civil life and are following steady employment.

Requests for help and advice are frequently received from cases which have been supervised in former years. Every effort is made by the Department to meet their needs and, where necessary, visiting may be resumed for a temporary period.

(h) DECEASED, 22. (Males, 13; Females, 9).

Causes of death were as follows:

General deterioration	.....	.....	.....	.....	8
Tuberculosis	.....	.....	.....	.....	5
Epilepsy	.....	.....	.....	.....	4
Pneumonia	.....	.....	.....	.....	2
Heart disease	.....	.....	.....	.....	1
Carcinoma	.....	.....	.....	.....	1
Extensive burns	.....	.....	.....	.....	1

Eight of the deceased were children below the age of 15. Seven were between the ages of 43 and 68 years.

DELINQUENCY

Fifty-eight charges were brought against 53 persons during 1954, as compared with 64 against 43 in 1953. One man was convicted for the eighth time, five for the fourth time, six for the third time and fifteen for the second time. The remaining twenty-six, including the three women who were charged, were first offenders.

The age distribution of those charged is as follows:

1	was	15	years of age	
5	were	16	"	"
13	"	17	"	"
6	"	18	"	"
5	"	19	"	"
3	"	20	"	"
2	"	21	"	"
4	"	22	"	"
14	"	23-46	"	"

They were charged with the following offences:

Larceny	18
Breaking and entering	12
Indecent behaviour	6
Drunk and disorderly	5
Fraud	3
In possession of offensive weapons	2
Causing bodily harm	3
Disorderly behaviour	2
Breach of Probation	1
Motor and Cycle offences	2
Obscene language	2
Homosexuality	1
Arrears of maintenance	1
	<hr/>
	58

The following action was taken:

Placed on probation	13
Fined	14
Imprisoned	5
Committed to Borstal	8
Committed to approved school	1
Bound over	8
Committed to M.D. Institution	1
Disqualified from driving	1
Discharged	2
	<hr/>
	53

It is noteworthy that the majority of young offenders come from homes where conditions are unsatisfactory. In many cases the moral standard of the home is low and parents often make no attempt to exercise control over the defective once he is adolescent. It is again noticeable that the majority of those who get into trouble do so within two years after leaving Special Schools. The continued high incidence of indictable offences among boys from residential Special Schools confirms the opinion expressed in previous reports that special provision should be made for the accommodation and supervision of this group of boys after they have left school.

It may be of interest to give examples of the subsequent progress of some of those listed as offenders in former years:

"F," who was sent to prison for 12 months on three charges of larceny in 1953, has now returned to live with his sister's family where he is afforded every encouragement and advantage. Determined to make amends he has given up his former friends and is following steady employment in a factory.

"G," committed to Borstal for stealing in 1950, is now much improved in every way. Despite adverse home conditions he now maintains a respectable appearance, shows a sense of responsibility and is being trained as a toolsetter.

"H," committed to Borstal in 1948, and to prison in 1951, on charges of stealing, shows a marked improvement since his marriage. He has two children, has recently redecorated his house throughout, and is earning £14 a week with a building firm.

